# IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA

CASE MANAGEMENT TRACK DESIGNATION FORM MICHAEL GODINO, CIVIL ACTION HOSPITALITY LLC NO. In accordance with the Civil Justice Expense and Delay Reduction Plan of this court, counsel for plaintiff shall complete a Case Management Track Designation Form in all civil cases at the time of filing the complaint and serve a copy on all defendants. (See § 1:03 of the plan set forth on the reverse side of this form.) In the event that a defendant does not agree with the plaintiff regarding said designation, that defendant shall, with its first appearance, submit to the clerk of court and serve on the plaintiff and all other parties, a Case Management Track Designation Form specifying the track to which that defendant believes the case should be assigned. SELECT ONE OF THE FOLLOWING CASE MANAGEMENT TRACKS: (a) Habeas Corpus – Cases brought under 28 U.S.C. § 2241 through § 2255. ( ) (b) Social Security – Cases requesting review of a decision of the Secretary of Health and Human Services denying plaintiff Social Security Benefits. ( ) (c) Arbitration – Cases required to be designated for arbitration under Local Civil Rule 53.2. (d) Asbestos – Cases involving claims for personal injury or property damage from exposure to asbestos. (e) Special Management – Cases that do not fall into tracks (a) through (d) that are commonly referred to as complex and that need special or intense management by the court. (See reverse side of this form for a detailed explanation of special management cases.) (f) Standard Management – Cases that do not fall into any one of the other tracks.

**FAX Number** 

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(Civ. 660) 10/02

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212-465-1188

JS 44 (Rev. 06/17)

# CIVIL COVER SHEET

The JS 44 civil cover sheet and the information contained herein neither replace nor supplement the filing and service of pleadings or other papers as required by law, except as provided by local rules of court. This form, approved by the Judicial Conference of the United States in September 1974, is required for the use of the Clerk of Court for the purpose of initiating the civil docket sheet. (SEE INSTRUCTIONS ON NEXT PAGE OF THIS FORM.)

I. (a) PLAINTIFFS MICHAEL GODINO, on behalf of himself and all others similarly situated				METHOD HOSPITALITY LLC				
(b) County of Residence of First Listed Plaintiff Nassau County (EXCEPT IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES)				County of Residence of First Listed Defendant  (IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES ONLY)  NOTE: IN LAND CONDEMNATION CASES, USE THE LOCATION OF THE TRACT OF LAND INVOLVED.				
(c) Attorneys (Firm Name, Address, and Telephone Number) C.K. Lee, Esq., Lee Litigation Group, PLLC 30 East 39th Street, Second Floor, New York, NY 10016 Tel: (212) 465-1188				Attorneys (If Known,	)			
II. BASIS OF JURISDICTION (Place an "X" in One Box Only)				TIZENSHIP OF I	PRINCIPA	L PARTIES	(Place an "X" in One	Box for Plaintiff
□ 1 U.S. Government Plaintiff	3 Federal Question (U.S. Government Not a Party)				PTF DEF	Incorporated or Pr		F DEF
☐ 2 U.S. Government Defendant	☐ 4 Diversity (Indicate Citizensh	np of Parties in Item III)			0 2 0 2	Incorporated and I of Business In A	Another State	
		n or Subject of a 3 3 Foreign Nation 6 6						
IV. NATURE OF SUIT			FO	DEFITUDE/DENIAL TV			of Suit Code Descrip	
CONTRACT  110 Insurance 120 Marine 130 Miller Act 140 Negotiable Instrument Enforcement of Judgment Student Loans (Excludes Veterans) 153 Recovery of Overpayment of Veteran's Benefits 160 Stockholders' Suits 190 Other Contract 195 Contract Product Liability 196 Franchise  REAL PROPERTY 210 Land Condemnation 220 Forcelosure 230 Rent Lease & Ejectment 240 Torts to Land 245 Tort Product Liability 290 All Other Real Property	PERSONAL INJURY    310 Airplane   315 Airplane Product Liability   320 Assault, Libel & Slander   330 Federal Employers' Liability   340 Marine   345 Marine Product Liability   350 Motor Vehicle   355 Motor Vehicle   700 Other Personal Injury   360 Other Personal Injury   362 Personal Injury   Medical Malpractice   CIVIL RIGHTS   441 Voting   442 Employment   443 Housing/ Accommodations   445 Amer. w/Disabilities - Employment   445 Amer. w/Disabilities - Other   448 Education   448 Educati	PERSONAL INJURY  PERSONAL INJURY  365 Personal Injury - Product Liability  367 Health Care/ Pharmaceutical Personal Injury Product Liability  368 Asbestos Personal Injury Product Liability  PERSONAL PROPERI  370 Other Fraud  371 Truth in Lending  380 Other Personal Property Damage Product Liability  PRISONER PETITIONS  Habeas Corpus:  463 Alien Detaince  510 Motions to Vacate Sentence  530 General  535 Death Penalty Other:  540 Mandamus & Other  550 Civil Rights  555 Prison Condition  560 Civil Rights  Conditions of Conditions of	7	EABOR  LABOR  Fair Labor Standards Act Labor/Management Relations Railway Labor Act Family and Medical Leave Act Other Labor Litigation Employee Retirement Income Security Act  IMMIGRATION Naturalization Application Other Immigration Actions	422 Appe	SC 157  RTY RIGHTS rights t t - Abbreviated Drug Application mark SECURITY (1395ff) Lung (923) C/DIWW (405(g)) Title XVI 405(g))  LT TAX SUITS (U.S. Plaintiff fendant)	OTHER STAT  375 False Claims . 376 Qui Tam (31 la 3729(a))  400 State Reappor  410 Antitrust  430 Banks and Ban 450 Commerce 460 Deportation  470 Racketeer Infl Corrupt Organ  480 Consumer Cre 490 Cable/Sat TV  850 Securities/Con Exchange  891 Agricultural A 893 Environmental  895 Freedom of In Act  896 Arbitration  899 Administrative Act/Review or Agency Decisi  950 Constitutionali State Statutes	Act USC  itionment  nking  uenced and izations dit  mmodities/ y Actions ets  Matters formation  Procedure  Appeal of on
	noved from 3	Remanded from  Appellate Court	4 Reinst Reope	ned Anothe	er District	6 Multidistrie	- Litiga	ation -
VI. CAUSE OF ACTION  Cite the U.S. Civil Statute under which you are filing (Do not cite jurisdictional statutes unless diversity):  Title III of Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C. Section 12181, et seq.  Brief description of cause: Plaintiff seeks injunction to the visually impaired								
VII. REQUESTED IN COMPLAINT: CHECK IF THIS IS A CLASS ACTION UNDER RULE 23, F.R.Cv.P.				EMAND S  CHECK YES only if demanded in complaint:  JURY DEMAND: X Yes  No				
VIII. RELATED CASE(S)  IF ANY  JUDGE DOCKET NUMBER								
DATE 12 - 22 - 2017  FOR OFFICE USE ONLY  SIGNATURE OF ATTORNEY OF RECORD								
RECEIPT # AMOUNT APPLITING IFP JUDGE MAG JUDGE								

# UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA — DESIGNATION FORM to be used by counsel to indicate the category of the case for the purpose of assignment to appropriate calendar.							
Address of Plaintiff: C/o Lee Litigation Group, PLIC, 30 ]	= 39th st, 2nd Floot, New York, NY 1001b						
Address of Defendant: 30 South 15th street, Swite 1000, Ph	iladelphia. PA 19102						
Place of Accident, Incident or Transaction:							
(Use Reverse Side For Ac	lditional Space)						
Does this civil action involve a nongovernmental corporate party with any parent corporation are	id any publicly held corporation owning 10% or more of its stock?						
(Attach two copies of the Disclosure Statement Form in accordance with Fed.R.Civ.P. 7.1(a))	Yes□ No□						
Does this case involve multidistrict litigation possibilities?	Yes□ No□						
RELATED CASE, IF ANY:							
Case Number: Judge	Date Terminated:						
Civil cases are deemed related when yes is answered to any of the following questions:							
1. Is this case related to property included in an earlier numbered suit pending or within one year previously terminated action in this court?							
Yes□ No♥							
2. Does this case involve the same issue of fact or grow out of the same transaction as a prior suit pending or within one year previously terminated							
action in this court?							
3. Does this case involve the validity or infringement of a patent already in suit or any earlier no							
terminated action in this court?  Yes No.							
4. Is this case a second or successive habeas corpus, social security appeal, or pro se civil rights	case filed by the same individual?						
	Yes□ No. 🗹						
CIVIL: (Place V in ONE CATEGORY ONLY)							
A. Federal Question Cases:	D. Diversity Insidiation Corner						
1. □ Indemnity Contract, Marine Contract, and All Other Contracts	B. Diversity Jurisdiction Cases:  1. □ Insurance Contract and Other Contracts						
2. □ FELA	2. □ Airplane Personal Injury						
3. □ Jones Act-Personal Injury	3. □ Assault, Defamation						
4. □ Antitrust	4. □ Marine Personal Injury						
5. □ Patent	<ol> <li>□ Motor Vehicle Personal Injury</li> </ol>						
6. Labor-Management Relations	6. □ Other Personal Injury (Please specify)						
7. V Civil Rights	7. □ Products Liability						
8. □ Habeas Corpus	8.   Products Liability — Asbestos						
9. □ Securities Act(s) Cases	9. □ All other Diversity Cases						
10. □ Social Security Review Cases	(Please specify)						
11. □ All other Federal Question Cases							
(Please specify)							
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ARBITRATION CERTI							
I, C.F. Lee, Esq., counsel of record do hereby certify:  Pursuant to Local Civil Rule 53.2, Section 3(c)(2), that to the best of my knowledge and belief, the damages recoverable in this civil action case exceed the sum of							
\$150,000.00 exclusive of interest and costs;  Relief other than monetary damages is sought.							
DATE: [22.201]							
Attorney at-Law Attorney I.D.#							
<b>NOTE:</b> A trial de novo will be a trial by jury only if there has been compliance with F.R.C.P. 38.							
I certify that, to my knowledge, the within case is not related to any case now pending or w	ithin one year previously terminated action in this court						
except as noted above.							
DATE: [V. VV. 201]	CL 4886						
Attorney-at-Law	Attorney I.D.#						
CIV. 609 (5/2012)							

LEE LITIGATION GROUP, PLLC C.K. Lee (CL 4086) 30 East 39th Street, Second Floor New York, NY 10016

Tel.: 212-465-1188 Fax: 212-465-1181

Attorneys for Plaintiff and the Class

## UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA

MICHAEL GODINO, on behalf of himself and all others similarly situated,

Case No.:

Plaintiff,

CLASS ACTION COMPLAINT

-against-

METHOD HOSPITALITY LLC,

Defendant.

Plaintiff, MICHAEL GODINO (hereinafter, "Plaintiff"), on behalf of himself and all others similarly situated, by and through his undersigned attorney, hereby files this Class Action Complaint against Defendant, METHOD HOSPITALITY LLC (hereinafter "Defendant"), and states as follows:

#### INTRODUCTION

1. This class action seeks to put an end to systemic civil rights violations committed by Defendant against the blind in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and across the United States. Defendant is denying blind individuals throughout the United States equal access to the goods and services Defendant provides to its non-disabled customers through http://wmmulherinssons.com (hereinafter the "Website"). The Website provides to the public a

wide array of the goods, services, and other programs offered by Defendant. Yet, the Website contains access barriers that make it difficult, if not impossible, for blind customers to use the Website. Defendant thus excludes the blind from the full and equal participation in the growing Internet economy that is increasingly a fundamental part of the common marketplace and daily living. In the wave of technological advances in recent years, assistive computer technology is becoming an increasingly prominent part of everyday life, allowing blind people to fully and independently access a variety of services, including browsing Defendant's hours and contact information online.

- 2. Plaintiff is a blind individual. He brings this civil rights class action against Defendant for failing to design, construct, and/or own or operate a website that is fully accessible to, and independently usable by, blind people.
- 3. Specifically, the Website has many access barriers preventing blind people from independently navigating and completing a purchase using assistive computer technology.
- 4. Plaintiff uses the terms "blind person" or "blind people" and "the blind" to refer to all persons with visual impairments who meet the legal definition of blindness in that they have a visual acuity with correction of less than or equal to 20 x 200. Some blind people who meet this definition have limited vision. Others have no vision.
- 5. Approximately 8.1 million people in the United States are visually impaired, including 2.0 million who are blind. There are nearly 300,000 visually impaired persons in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. <sup>2</sup>
  - 6. Many blind people enjoy online shopping and browsing just as sighted people do.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Americans with Disabilities: 2010 Report, U.S. Census Bureau Reports

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Pennsylvania," American Foundation for the Blind, last modified January 2017, http://www.afb.org/info/blindness-statistics/state-specific-statistical-information/pennsylvania/235.

The lack of an accessible website means that blind people are excluded from the rapidly expanding self-service hospitality industry and from independently accessing the Website.

- 7. Despite readily available accessible technology, such as the technology in use at other heavily trafficked websites, which makes use of alternative text, accessible forms, descriptive links, and resizable text, and limits the usage of tables and JavaScript, Defendant has chosen to rely on an exclusively visual interface. Defendant's sighted customers can independently browse, select, and browse Defendant's hours and contact information online without the assistance of others. However, blind people must rely on sighted companions to assist them in browsing Defendant's hours and contact information on the Website.
- 8. By failing to make the Website accessible to blind persons, Defendant is violating basic equal access requirements under federal law.
- 9. Congress provided a clear and national mandate for the elimination of discrimination against individuals with disabilities when it enacted the Americans with Disabilities Act. Such discrimination includes barriers to full integration, independent living, and equal opportunity for persons with disabilities, including those barriers created by websites and other public accommodations that are inaccessible to blind and visually impaired persons.
- 10. Plaintiff intended to browse Defendant's hours and contact information on the Website. However, unless Defendant remedies the numerous access barriers on the Website, Plaintiff and Class members will continue to be unable to independently navigate, browse, and use the Website.
- 11. This complaint seeks declaratory and injunctive relief to correct Defendant's policies and practices to include measures necessary to ensure compliance with federal law, to include monitoring of such measures, and to update and remove accessibility barriers on the

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Website so that Plaintiff and the proposed Class and Subclass of customers who are blind will be able to independently and privately use the Website. This complaint also seeks compensatory damages to compensate Class members for having been subjected to unlawful discrimination.

#### JURISDICTION AND VENUE

- 12. This Court has subject matter jurisdiction of this action pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1331 and 42 U.S.C. § 12188, for Plaintiff's claims arising under Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C. § 12181, *et seq.*, ("ADA").
- 13. Venue is proper in the Eastern District of Pennsylvania pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §§ 1391(b)-(c) and 1441(a). Defendant is subject to personal jurisdiction in the Eastern District of Pennsylvania based on the principle place of business of Defendant. Defendant is registered to do business in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and has been doing business in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The restaurant location is owned by Defendant and is located in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Defendant is subject to personal jurisdiction in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Defendant also has been and is committing the acts alleged herein in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, has been and is violating the rights of consumers in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and has been and is causing injury to consumers in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

## **PARTIES**

14. Plaintiff is and has been at all times material hereto a resident of Nassau County, New York.

- U.S.C. § 12102(1)-(2) and the regulations implementing the ADA set forth at 28 CFR §§ 36.101 et seq. Plaintiff cannot use a computer without the assistance of screen reading software. Plaintiff has been denied the full enjoyment of the facilities, goods and services of the Website, as a result of accessibility barriers on the Website. Most recently in December 2017, Plaintiff attempted to browse Defendant's hours and contact information on the Website but could not browse Defendant's hours and contact information due to the inaccessibility of the Website. The inaccessibility of the Website has deterred him and Class members from enjoying the goods and services of Defendant.
- 16. Defendant is an American for-profit corporation organized under the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania with a process of service address at 30 South 15<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 1000, Philadelphia, PA 19102. Defendant owns and operates Wm. Mulherin's Sons, a combined hotel and restaurant located at 1355 North Front Street, Philadelphia, PA 19122.
- 17. Defendant owns and operates Wm. Mulherin's Sons (hereinafter the "Hotel and Restaurant"), which is a place of public accommodation located in Pennsylvania. Wm. Mulherin's Sons provides to the public important goods, such as accommodations, dinner, brunch, and cocktails. Among other things, the Website provides access to the array of goods and services offered to the public by Defendant. The inaccessibility of the Website has deterred Plaintiff from browsing Defendant's hours and contact information online.
- 18. Plaintiff, on behalf of himself and others similarly situated, seeks full and equal access to the services provided by Defendant through the Website.

#### **CLASS ACTION ALLEGATIONS**

- 19. Plaintiff, on behalf of himself and all others similarly situated, seeks certification of the following nationwide class pursuant to Rule 23(a) and 23(b)(2) of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure: "all legally blind individuals in the United States who have attempted to access the Website and as a result have been denied access to the enjoyment of goods and services offered by Defendant, during the relevant statutory period."
- 20. Plaintiff seeks certification of the following Pennsylvania subclass pursuant to Fed.R.Civ.P. 23(a), 23(b)(2), and, alternatively, 23(b)(3): "all legally blind individuals in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania who have attempted to access the Website and as a result have been denied access to the enjoyment of goods and services offered by Defendant, during the relevant statutory period."
- 21. There are hundreds of thousands of visually impaired persons in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. There are approximately 8.1 million people in the United States who are visually impaired. Thus, the persons in the class are so numerous that joinder of all such persons is impractical and the disposition of their claims in a class action is a benefit to the parties and to the Court.
- 22. This case arises out of Defendant's policy and practice of maintaining an inaccessible website that denies blind persons access to the goods and services of the Website and the Restaurant. Due to Defendant's policy and practice of failing to remove access barriers, blind persons have been and are being denied full and equal access to independently browse the Website and by extension the goods and services offered through the Website by the Restaurant.
- 23. There are common questions of law and fact common to the class, including without limitation, the following:
  - a. Whether the Website is a "public accommodation" under the ADA; and

- b. Whether Defendant through the Website denies the full and equal enjoyment of its goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages, or accommodations to people with visual disabilities in violation of the ADA.
- 24. The claims of the named Plaintiff are typical of those of the class. The class, similarly to the Plaintiff, are severely visually impaired or otherwise blind, and claim that Defendant has violated the ADA by failing to update or remove access barriers on the Website, so it can be independently accessible to the class of people who are legally blind.
- 25. Plaintiff will fairly and adequately represent and protect the interests of the members of the Class because Plaintiff has retained and is represented by counsel competent and experienced in complex class action litigation, and because Plaintiff has no interests antagonistic to the members of the class. Class certification of the claims is appropriate pursuant to Fed. R. Civ. P. 23(b)(2) because Defendant has acted or refused to act on grounds generally applicable to the Class, making appropriate both declaratory and injunctive relief with respect to Plaintiff and the Class as a whole.
- 26. Alternatively, class certification is appropriate under Fed. R. Civ. P. 23(b)(3) because questions of law and fact common to Class members clearly predominate over questions affecting only individual class members, and because a class action is superior to other available methods for the fair and efficient adjudication of this litigation.
- 27. Judicial economy will be served by maintenance of this lawsuit as a class action in that it is likely to avoid the burden that would be otherwise placed upon the judicial system by the filing of numerous similar suits by people with visual disabilities throughout the United States.
- 28. References to Plaintiff shall be deemed to include the named Plaintiff and each member of the class, unless otherwise indicated.

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## **FACTUAL ALLEGATIONS**

- 29. Defendant operates the Hotel and Restaurant, a combined hotel and restaurant in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania at 1355 North Front Street, Philadelphia, PA 19122.
- 30. The Website is a service and benefit offered by Defendant throughout the United States, including the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The Website is owned, controlled and/or operated by Defendant.
  - 31. Among the features offered by the Website are the following:
    - (a) hotel information, allowing persons who wish to stay at the Hotel to learn its location, hours, and phone number;
    - (b) restaurant information, allowing persons who wish to dine at the Restaurant to learn its location, hours, and phone number;
    - (c) a description of the amenities of the Hotel;
    - (d) a menu for the Restaurant;
    - (e) galleries of photos of the Hotel and Restaurant;
    - (f) the ability to purchase gift cards for the Restaurant;
    - (g) the ability to make a reservation for the Hotel and Restaurant; and
    - (h) information about the Hotel and Restaurant's history.
- 32. This case arises out of Defendant's policy and practice of denying the blind access to the Website, including the goods and services offered by Defendant through the Website. Due to Defendant's failure and refusal to remove access barriers to the Website, blind individuals have been and are being denied equal access to the Restaurant, as well as to the numerous goods, services and benefits offered to the public through the Website.